

SUBJECT: Approval of a five year list (2010-2014) of projects for master planning and an update on the status of master planning.

FOR: FEBRUARY, 2010 BOARD MEETING

TO BE PRESENTED BY: Steve Miller and Kate Fitzgerald

SUMMARY:

NR44.4(2) requires NRB authorization for the Department to conduct property master planning. Authorization is requested to initiate planning on 31 projects over the next five year (2010-2014) period.

Additionally, in 2006 the NRB authorized a three-tiered system for planning Department properties. This is the first update on the status of master planning since implementation of the three-tiered approach. The three-tiered system was designed to improve efficiency and help assure that the level of planning is driven by the complexity of the management and public use issues on the property, the level of cross-program integration needed, and the level of public interest and potential controversy.

RECOMMENDATION: Authorize the Department to conduct master planning activities for the 31 projects on the five year project list.

LIST OF ATTACHED MATERIALS:

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|----------|
| No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Fiscal Estimate Required | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | Attached |
| No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Environmental Assessment or Impact Statement Required | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | Attached |
| No <input type="checkbox"/> | Background Memo | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Attached |

APPROVED:

Steve Miller
Bureau Director,

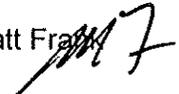
1-19-10
Date

Janie Steudorf
Administrator,

1/20/10
Date

Matt Frank
Secretary, Matt Frank

2-3-10
Date

DATE: February 5, 2010
TO: Natural Resources Board
FROM: Matt Frank 
SUBJECT: Master Planning Update and Planning Authorization

The purpose of this agenda item is to update the Natural Resources Board (NRB) on the Department's progress on property master planning and to request authorization to conduct master planning on 31 projects over the next five years.

Importance of property master plans

Property (master) plans are an essential component of the department's property management system. They determine and guide the property's resource management, the types and level of recreational use, and set the framework for facilities and infrastructure development. These plans are also the primary tool for implementing integrated ecosystem management on department managed lands. Additionally, functional, up-to-date property master plans are requirements of third-party forest certification.

Role of the NRB

NR 44 and NR 160 establish the Natural Resources Board's role in property planning. The Board determines whether a master plan will be developed for any department managed property, authorizes the Department to develop a master plan or plan amendment, and approves all master plans and plan amendments. Further, NR 44 provides that the Board may direct the Department to follow an alternative planning process (other than that established by NR 44) for any property.

Streamlined planning process

A major revision to property planning that streamlined the process and improved efficiency was approved by the NRB in 2006. This revision recognized that not all properties require the same level of planning and approved the three-tiered planning system (Appendix A). With this system the level and detail of planning is driven by the complexity of the management and public use issues on the property, the level of cross-program integration needed, and the level of public interest and potential controversy. Under the three-tiered system, properties are assigned to the appropriate tier and each tier receives a different but appropriate level of planning and public involvement. This approach provides a more efficient and timely process for planning the less complex, non-controversial properties.

Planning accomplishments since 2006

The new three-tiered planning system along with a number of other important planning system improvements have significantly streamlined planning and are beginning to produce positive results. Some of these improvements are:

- Applying the most appropriate level of planning to a property (three-tiered planning system) rather than using a single approach on all properties
- Grouping similar properties into one planning project
- Tailoring the level and type of public involvement to each project

- Developing a property planning handbook for use by planners and planning teams
- Establishing standard templates for planning documents
- Streamlining the function of planning teams and setting stricter planning timelines
- Assigning specialists to carry out property inventories and other data gathering, and mapping well in advance of starting a planning process.

Process improvements such as these have reduced the average planning timelines by 30 percent or more compared to timelines prior to initiation of the new system. Over the last three years the Department has completed and the NRB has approved four Tier-1 plans covering seven properties and four Tier-2 plans. One of these Tier-2 projects, the Glacial Habitat Area (GHA), was the first large multi-property plan. It covers 11 properties, 10 wildlife areas and one state natural area. The second large multi-property plan, the Lower Chippewa River project, which is on the February NRB agenda for approval, covers 8 properties.

A significant number of projects are currently engaged in planning. At this time 9 planning projects are in active planning: four Tier-1 projects (covering six properties) and five Tier-2 projects covering 32 properties. To date no Tier-3 plans have been completed as the Tier-1 and Tier-2 properties have been the priority.

Planning status

NR 44 requires master plans be reviewed every 15 years. Additionally, up-to-date property plans are a basic requirement of third-party forest certification. In order to attain and maintain forest certification the Department has committed to updating all of the older (non-NR 44 compliant) plans within 15 years.

100 major properties (Tier-1 and Tier-2) need a property master plan or a major plan revision. Nearly all of the older plans date back 20 to 30 years and some properties do not have an approved plan. Most of the older plans are state parks and fish and wildlife areas. Updating the six northern state forest plans has been a priority over the last few years. Of the six northern state forests, four have new NR 44 plans, including the Black River State Forest Plan adopted in January 2010. The Flambeau River State Forest Plan is scheduled to be completed in mid 2010 and planning for Governor Knowles State Forest, the last northern forest without a current plan, begins this year as well.

Five year planning list

To begin reducing the planning backlog, the Department has developed a list of projects to plan or begin to plan over the next five years, 2010-2014 (attached). The Land Leadership Team used the following criteria to develop the five year planning list:

- Level of property management issues;
- Public demand for changes in property use;
- Consequence if planning is delayed compared to benefits of planning sooner;
- Readiness of the project for planning (i.e. availability of critical resource data);
- Availability of funding and staffing resources.

The Department is requesting authorization to conduct master planning on the properties listed on the attached Five Year Master Planning list. NR 44.4(2) requires NRB authorization for the Department to conduct property a master planning process on a property.

Five Year Master Planning Project List - 2010 –2014

Planning Projects in Progress			
Program	Region	Tier	Property or Group
FR	NOR	1	Flambeau River SF
PR	NER	1	High Cliff SP
PR	NER	1	Point Beach SF
WL	WCR	1	Meadow Valley WA Wood Co. WA Sandhill WA
PR	SCR	2	Capital Springs SP & RA
PR	SCR	2	Cross Plains IANSR
WL	NER	2	Lower Wolf River Habitat Area Group
WL	SER	2	Northern SER Property Group Kiel WA Nichols Creek WA Jackson Marsh WA Allenton WA Theresa Marsh WA Mullet Creek WA Sheboygan Marsh WA Cedarburg Bog NA
WL	SCR	2	Columbia & Northern Dane Co. Group Pine Island WA French Creek WA Swan Lake WA Pete Helland WA Paradise Marsh WA Mud Lake WA Lodi Marsh WA Rocky Run FA Rowan Creek FA
WL	NOR	2	Powell Marsh WA

New Planning Projects* (not listed in priority order)			
Program	Region	Tier	Property or Group
FR	NOR	1	Gov. Knowles SF
LF	SCR	1	Lower WI State Riverway
LF	NOR	1	Pine/Popple Wild Rivers & Spread Eagle Barrens NA
PR	NOR	1	Copper Falls SP
PR	NER	1	Door Co. Parks Peninsula SP Potawatomi SP Newport SP Rock Island SP Whitefish Dunes SP
PR	SER	1	Kettle Moraine SF (all units, except Pike Lake)
PR	SCR	1	Sauk Prairie Rec Area (Badger Army) and Baraboo Hills Rec. Area
PR	SCR	1	Devils Lake SP & IANSR, and Natural Bridge SP & Rocky Arbor SP
PR & WL	SCR	1	Yellowstone Lake SP & Yellowstone WA
WL	NOR	1	Crex Meadows Group Crex Meadows WA Fish Lake WA Amsterdam Sloughs WA Danbury WA
WL	WCR	1	Mead WA, McMillan WA, & Dewey Marsh WA
WL	SER	1	North Br. Milwaukee River WA & Farm Heritage Area
WL	NOR	2	Lake Superior Area – Northwest Barrens Group Douglas Co. WA Namekagon Barrens WA

WL	NOR	2	White River Property Group - Lake Superior Area White River WA White River FA Bibon Swamp NA
WL	NER	2	Green Bay West Shores WA
WL	SER	2	Southern SER Property Group Vernon, WA Tichigan WA Honey Creek WA New Munster WA Turtle Creek WA Turtle Valley WA Big Muskego WA Lulu Lake NA
WL	SCR	2	Dodge Co. Group Horicon Marsh Shaw Marsh
WL	NER	2	Kewaunee & Door Co. Group Besadny WA Gardner WA Mud Lake WA Baileys Harbor NA
WL	WCR	2	LaCrosse, Trempeiau & Jackson Co. Group Borst Valley WA Chimney Rock WA Lakes Coulee WA South Beaver Creek WA Van Loon WA North Bend WA
PR	Ice Age Trail Area Group	2	IATA Areas in Walworth, Washington, Waukesha, Rock Counties
PR	WCR	2	Merrick SP, Perrot SP, & Whitman Dam WA

* This list is based on the level of planning that could be accomplished with the planning resources projected to be available over the 2010 - 2014 period.

Appendix A

The Three-Tiered Planning System

Each plan tier, or category, has a different level of plan and planning, each tier tailored to fit a different category of property based on their complexity and management needs.

Tier One – Master Plans

49 planning projects (57 properties)

This tier focuses on the most complex, heavily used properties, or properties that otherwise have significant management issues warranting a highly focused planning effort. State Forests and the larger state parks are prime examples of this type of property. Generally these plans are focused on a single property, although occasionally two or more closely related properties will be covered in a Tier-1 plan.

Tier Two – Master Plans

70 planning projects (215 properties)

The management of Tier Two properties is not complex and there are few controversial issues. Such properties are well suited to being managed under more general management prescriptions. The Tier Two Master Plans frequently cover multiple properties, particularly for wildlife and fishery area properties, such as the Lower Chippewa River Properties plan. Parks typically are planned as single projects because of the high level of focused public interest in each individual park.

Tier Three – Management Sheets

900+ properties

Management Sheets are used to establish a uniform file record of the location, purpose and management information on minor properties and scattered parcels. Properties in Tier Three are single purpose, generally smaller properties, like boat access sites, towers, and most scattered wildlife, fish, and forest lands.

A Management Sheet will generally be a one to a few pages describing the parcel's location, its purpose, management and any development present or allowed. Multiple identical properties, like communication tower sites, will be covered under a single document.